

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

According to the above amendments, claim 3, 13, and 14 are pending. Claim 3 is amended and claim 14 is new and is fully supported by the specification as originally filed. Claims 1 – 2 and 4 – 12 have been or are now cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicants^{*} respectfully submit that the cited references of Ishii, Busler and/or Hamano, whether taken individually or in any combination, do not teach or suggest a feed hold that is provided on the locking member attachment and the locked member attachment at a position at which a positional relationship of the feed hole with a contiguous feed hole corresponds with a regular feed hole of the tape members at said constant pitch, as recited in amended claim 3, and further, in a state of engaging the locking member and the locked member, as stated in new claim 14. According to the pending claims as indicated on pages 2 – 5, the features effectively allow the first and second tape members to be secured together with sufficient strength without requiring the locked part (e.g., locking member and locked member attachments) to be set within one pitch (e.g., one pitch apart). Moreover, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine or modify Ishii, Busler and/or Hamano in order to obtain claims 3, 13, and 14.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. NGB-36261.

Respectfully submitted,
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